

THTR 305a Directing (Section 62859R)

Units: 4

Fall 2021—Tue/Thu—Noon-1:50PM

Location: PED 207

Instructor: Tim Dang

Office: By appointment only. In person outdoor meetings a half hour before or after class.

Online Office Hours: By appointment only. Email me to set up a zoom appointment.

Contact Info: timdang@usc.edu

Course Description

Examination of:

- A) basic directorial principles and vision of play production to include pre-production analysis, casting, rehearsal procedures, and storytelling;
- B) relationship of the director to actor, playwright, and design team; and
- C) integration of technical aspects of production.

Course focus will emphasize hands-on experience in developing strength and confidence in the areas of communication, collaboration, and leadership skills.

Learning Objectives

- 1) To discuss the basic principles and procedures required of a stage director to mount a theatrical production.
- 2) To cultivate leadership skills necessary in the creation of an ensemble brought together for the purpose of play production.
- 3) To discover the role of the director as a collaborative individual able to articulate and shape the vision while embracing the creativity of the design team and actors.
- 4) To facilitate practical experience in the role of director through classroom exercises, in collaborations with designers, and scene-work with actors.
- 5) To be familiar with other facets of theatre production such as budgets, marketing, publicity, script development, audience engagement, and fundraising.

Prerequisite(s): Admittance to the BFA in Acting for Stage, Screen and New Media

Co-Requisite(s): THTR 120A, THTR 140A and THTR 125

Concurrent Enrollment: THTR 120A, THTR 140A and THTR 125

Approval: SDA Associate Dean of Admissions

Recommended Preparation: N/A

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials*

Prices and book list are subject to change.

- Jory. *Tips: Ideas for Directors*. (Required)

ISBN: 9781575252414

New: \$19.95

Used: \$15.00

Rental: \$14.96 (New), \$7.98 (Used)

- Weston. *Directing Actors*. (Required)

ISBN: 9781615930135

eBook: \$18.00

or

- Weston. *Directing Actors*. (Required)

ISBN: 9780941188241

New: \$29.95

Used: \$22.50

Rental: \$19.47 (New), \$11.98 (Used)

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- Winkler. *Kentucky*. (Required)

ISBN: 9780822236221

New: \$10.00

Used: \$7.50

Rental: \$7.50 (New), \$4.00 (Used)

- Reza. *God of Carnage*. (Required)

ISBN: 9780822223993

New: \$10.00

Used: \$7.50

Rental: \$7.50 (New), \$4.00 (Used)

Purchase from USC Bookstore

*These materials are available through the USC Bookstore, and most likely online (Amazon, Samuel French, Dramatist Publishing, TCG, etc).

- One additional play ***TBA-To Be Announced*** (Required Reading)(Tim to provide)
- One **Play of Your Choice** for your Final Directing Scene
- Two **Director's Journal** are required and each journal has three sections: 1) A log of notes from each class; 2) Comments from observing your fellow classmates directing scenes; and 3) Vision Playbook or play production research, vision statement, design elements (set, costumes, lights, sound), rehearsal log (dates and summary of rehearsal process), copy of scene with blocking, prop list, etc. as you prepare your midterm directing scene (from ***Kentucky*** or ***God of Carnage*** or ***TBA Play***) and for your final for Directing Scene.

- Students are responsible for providing necessary props, costumes and minimal background/set pieces for scene work. Minimal set pieces of blocks and tables are provided in PED 207. Be aware of covid protocols and select scenes where there is no physical contact or intimacy. Select scenes with a minimal amount of actors (2-3). Please be well prepared on the day that your scene is to be rehearsed and performed in front of the class.
- Students must also make sure that the actors selected for their scene are available the day and time your scene is to be rehearsed/performed in class.
- Budget into your time allotted the delegation of prepping your actors, and prepping your design elements for your observed rehearsal, mid-term, and final.

Description of Grading Criteria and Assessment of Assignments

30 points	Participation in daily class discussion, assignments, exercises, and observed rehearsals throughout semester
20	Directing a Scene from <i>Kentucky</i> or <i>God of Carnage</i> or <i>TBA Play</i> - <i>midterm</i>
10	Submission of Director's Journal 1 - Midterm
10	Vision Play Oral Presentaton
20	Directing a Scene (or Finalizing a Design Aspect) from a play of your choice - Final
10	Submission of Director's Journal 2 - Final Extra Credit (TBA)

100 points Total Points Possible

Grading Scale for SDA: **A** indicates work of excellent quality; **B** of good quality; **C** of average quality; **D** of below average quality; and **F** indicates inadequate work.

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

Attendance, Time Requirements, and Classroom Rules

Masks covering your nose and mouth must be worn at all times during class including rehearsing of scenes and presentation of mid-term/final scenes.

- 1) To give yourself the most positive experience in Directing 305A, be punctual, prepared, and responsible, as other students are depending on you. Remember, you are the director and you set the example and tone for the process.
- 2) This is a process-oriented class. Attendance is imperative. Class exercises and discussions are experimental in nature and make up work is not always possible. Scheduled observed rehearsals that are missed will not/cannot be rescheduled unless you exchange time slots with your fellow classmates.
- 3) Late work may be accepted at the discretion of the instructor and then will be docked no less than two points per day past due. All written work must be submitted by the deadline via email timdang@usc.edu.
- 4) There are no excuses for absences. Being late to class (or leaving early before class has ended or leaving for an extended period during class) three times constitute one absence. There is a one point deduction for each of the first two absences. There is a two point deduction for each of the third and fourth absences. There is a three point deduction for each of the fifth and sixth absences.
- 5) Acting in other students 305A scenes are encouraged and will count as one point of extra credit towards your final grade. If this occurs in another section of 305A, please bring documentation of participation. A maximum of three extra credit points are possible for this class. If you participate in more than three directing 305a scenes, you will only receive the max three extra credit points at the end of the semester. You may participate in more than three scenes by your choice for your own skill building but do not overwhelm yourself with your course load. Acting in 305a scenes requires full memorization of scenes performed as an actor.
- 6) Each student will maintain a Director's Journal containing: classroom notes, observations, and comments upon viewing other students' in-class rehearsals and scene presentations research and dramaturgy.
- 7) Rehearsals outside of scheduled class time are required for a successful outcome in 305a. Be aware, scene may not be cast with students outside of USC. Please follow all covid protocols when you rehearse outside of class. Rehearsal space may also be reserved.
- 8) You may not act in your own scene and direct yourself.
- 9) Logistical prowess in terms of time management for self and others is required.
- 10) Attention to essential props, costumes, and set pieces for scene work is encouraged.
- 11) Your Vision Playbook (section 3 of the Director's Journal) includes all additional prep material specific to your rehearsal process for the midterm and final scenes due at the time of student director's presentation. Your Vision Playbook should include (for midterm and final projects) the following components;

- One page Vision of your directing the entire production (not just the scene performed in class)
- Director’s report of your rehearsals and process – what happened at each rehearsal or a report of all your design meetings.
- Reference and research pertinent to the play – online photos, links, articles etc. Or set design/costume design sketches or links to sound cues etc.
- Ground plan, environmental sketches to the best of your ability, images of wardrobe, color palette, lighting descriptions, sound scapes
- Your character descriptions and prop lists. The director’s rehearsal script with margin notes and beat breakdown.
- A one page summary discussion of the director’s experience and development of process. For your summary discussion, what surprised you? Was anything exactly what you expected? What did you find “easy”? What provided the greatest challenge? Be sure to also include ideas/projections as to how you would fine-tune the process next time. Make use of references from Judith Weston and Jon jory’s books and pertinent classroom discussions.
- Director’s Journal is emailed the day when all mid-term scene presentations are complete. The second and final Director’s Journal is turned in on the day of finals when all scene presentations have been completed.
- Check your USC email regularly. Scheduling changes and other timely information may be sent electronically.
- Cell phones are to be turned off for the duration of class.
- Eating is not allowed in class. Drinking to keep hydrated is allowed removing your mask only to drink water and putting your mask back over your mouth and nose.
- Electronic capture of any portion of class is strictly prohibited without prior approval of the instructor.

Fall Break – October 14-15, 2021. No classes

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown*

Week 1	8/24	Introduction. Course outline review and expectations. Exercise: The mission and the vision.
	8/26	Discussion: The role of the director and your relationship to other theater makers. Exercise: Purposeful Mingle (Read Tips: Ideas for Directors: Casting and Vocabulary pg 2-27 by 8/31)
Week 2	8/31	Discussion: Casting and Vocabulary. Talent , Networking, Authenticity. Exercise: Tell My Story, Tell Your Story (Read Kentucky

- by Leah Nanako Winkler by 9/02)
- 9/02 Discussion: Kentucky. Initial instinct, play analysis, forming a vision. Themes, characters, tone (Read Tips: Ideas for Directors: The Play, The Team pg 30 – 59 by 9/07)
- Week 3 9/07 Discussion: The Play and the Team. Exercise: Direct/Perform Scenes from Kentucky (Read God of Carnage by 9/09)
- 9/09 Discussion: God of Carnage. Themes, character, tone. (Read Tips: Ideas for Directing: Table Work and Blocking pgs 68-116 by 9/14)
- Week 4 9/14 Discussion: Table Work and Blocking Working. Exercise: Direct/Perform scenes from God of Carnage (Read TBA Play by 9/16)
- 9/16 Discussion: TBA Play. Themes, character, tone. Exercise: The Deserted Island (Choose mid-term scenes to direct from either Kentucky or God of Carnage or TBA Play by 9/21; Read Tips: Ideas for Directors pg 118-174 Working With The Actor by 9/21)
- Week 5 9/21 Discussion: Working with the Actor, Rehearsals and the Environment you create for the story and the Environment for your artists. Exercise: Direct scenes from TBA Play. (Read Tips: Ideas for the Director pg 176-218 Rehearsal Process, Read Directing Actors pg 1-76 Result Direction and Quick Fixes and Moment by Moment by 10/26)
- 9/23 Observed Rehearsal: Directing your Kentucky/God of Carnage/TBA scene – blocking - 25% of class about 20 minutes each
- Week 6 9/28 Observed Rehearsal: Directing your Kentucky/God of Carnage/TBA scene – blocking 25% of class about 20 minutes each
- 9/30 Observed Rehearsal: Directing your Kentucky/God of Carnage/TBA scene – blocking - 25% of class about 20 minutes each
- Week 7 10/05 Observed Rehearsal: Directing your Kentucky/God of Carnage/TBA scene – blocking - 25% of class about 20 minutes each
- 10/07 Mid-Term Presentation of Scenes from Kentucky or God of Carnage or TBA play. Director’s Journal due by end of class as part of Mid-term. **Mandatory Attendance**
- Week 8 10/12 Mid-Term Presentation of Scenes from Kentucky or God of Carnage or TBA play. Director’s Journal due by end of class as part of Mid-term. **Mandatory Attendance** (Read Tips: Ideas for the Director pg 220-262 Comedy, The Final Stage, the Director’s Homework, and Directing Actors pg 77-159 Listening and Talking, Actors Choices, Transitions, Actors Resources and Training by 10/28)
- 10/14 SPRING BREAK – OFF
- Week 9 10/19 One-on-One Mid-term Evaluation/Your Plan for directing your Vision Play Scene – 50% of class called at appointment times, Others spend time putting their oral presentation together.

	10/21	One-on-One Mid-term Evaluation/Your Plan for directing your Vision Play Scene – 50% of class called at appointment times, Others spend time putting their oral presentation together.
Week 10	10/26	Discussion: Rehearsal Process, Result Direction, Quick Fixes, Technical elements to tell the story – sound, lights, costumes, props, set. Exercise: Painting the Scene/Telling the Story
	10/28	Discussion: (Tips) Comedy, The Final Stage, the Director’s Homework, and (Directing Actors) Listening and Talking, Actors Choices, Transitions, Actors Resources and Training. Exercise: sound enhancing the scene. (Read Directing Actors pg 163–244 Script Analysis and Casting by 11/02)
Week 11	11/02	Discussion: Other facets of theatre production – Budgets, marketing, publicity, fundraising. Exercise on Visualization from minimalist paintings. (Read Directing Actors pg 235 – 308 Rehearsal and Shooting by 11/30)
	11/04	Vision Play Oral Presentations and discussion (50% of class have 10 minutes each)
Week 12	11/09	Vision Play Oral Presentations and discussion (50% of class have 10 minutes each)
	11/11	Observed Rehearsal: Vision Play/Project (25% of class at about 20 minutes each)
Week 13	11/16	Observed Rehearsal: Vision Play/Project (25% of class at about 20 minutes each)
	11/18	Observed Rehearsal: Vision Play/Project (25% of class at about 20 minutes each)
Week 14	11/23	Observed Rehearsal: Vision Play/Project (25% of class at about 20 minutes each)
	11/25	THANKSGIVING DAY - OFF
Week 15	11/30	Discussion: (Directing Actors) Rehearsals and Casting. Class Wrap – Summary of Semester. Student Survey
	12/02	FINAL SCENES – 50% of class present their Directed Scene of their choice. Mandatory Attendance for ALL
Final	12/14	FINAL SCENES Tuesday December 14 11:00AM – 1:00PM PDT FI 50% of class present their Directed Scene of their choice. Mandatory Attendance for ALL. Your Directing Journal is due via email by 1:00pm on Tuesday, December 14, 2021. Please email your final to Tim Dang at TimDang@usc.edu .

Your Directing Journal may be submitted as a Word file or PDF file. I will confirm receipt within 24 hours. If I do not confirm receipt, please send me an email regarding this. Your file may be too large and may have to be sent via dropbox or wetransfer.

* This weekly breakdown subject to change based on the needs/requirement of the class.
 This syllabus serves as your contract for course 305a, Fall Semester 2021

EDI @SDA: Professional Development/Mandatory EDI Training
Wednesday, September 15, 2021

As part of our EDI initiatives and call to action, some workshops will be offered to faculty and staff and to students. Competencies that will be included: Anti-Racism (Faculty/Staff) and Equity Mindedness (Faculty/Staff), and then Theater Intimacy & Building Cultures of Consent (Students, Faculty/Staff). More details will follow. NOTE: All SDA classes will be cancelled to support involvement in this effort.

SDA PRODUCTIONS, ISPS, AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

SDA productions, ISPs and Extracurricular Activities* will not excuse you from any class work. There will be no exceptions made for absences in class, missed or delayed assignments, homework or lack of class participation resulting from your involvement in any of the above. Your grade will reflect your work in this class, independent from work in any other class or activity. *Activities that have been officially sanctioned by the larger university (such as marching band, song girls, or varsity sports) are exempt. You must submit official documentation to your professor regarding your participation in an event prior to your absence.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Statement for Students with Accessibility Requirements

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with *The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS)*. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from OSAS. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. OSAS is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website for OSAS and contact information: (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) ability@usc.edu.

Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies. See the universities site on Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

Health and Participation in Class

You are expected to complete your Trojan Check screener daily and, as your instructor, I may ask you to show your daily screening in class. Your health and safety, and the health and safety of your peers, are my top priorities. If you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, or if you discover that you have been in close contact with others who have symptoms or who have tested positive, you must follow the instructions on Trojan Check. My hope is that if you are feeling ill or if you have been exposed to someone with the virus, you will stay home to protect others. I will ensure that you can continue to participate in class remotely so that your education is not disrupted.

To reduce the spread of COVID-19, USC requires that face coverings (masks) be worn indoors including in classrooms. Face coverings must cover your nose and mouth and be worn throughout the class session. A mask with a valve is not considered an adequate face covering and should not be used, as it can expel

exhaled air, increasing the risk to others. Eating or drinking during class is prohibited because of the risk posed by removing your mask for these activities. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in your being asked to leave the classroom immediately. Requests for accommodations related to the face covering and eating/drinking policies should be directed to the Office for Student Accessibility Services (<https://osas.usc.edu/>).

SDA Student Support & Reporting Form:

To facilitate a supportive environment of accountability, SDA has created an internal system of reporting for students to address issues/concerns and to offer feedback or suggestions for improvement. This mechanism provides a pathway for reporting and offering feedback without fear of retaliation or judgment. Any submission filed through this form will be reviewed and processed accordingly through SDA Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

To file a report, please visit: <https://bit.ly/SDAstudentreporting>

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) - (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298
usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Student Accessibility Services - (213) 740-0776
<https://osas.usc.edu>

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710
campussupport.usc.edu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101
diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs, and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – _24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.
